THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRl RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (d) As per the information furnished by the State Govei-ament of Maharashtra the number of children who have died in the last three years in the Melghat region of Amravati district in Maharashtra is as follows:—

Year	No. of deaths
1994 .	1119
1995 .	1099
1996 .	1451

Upto July, 1997 a total of 323 children have in this region and none of the children died due to want of food.

The Public Distribution System is joint responsibility of the Central Government and the State Governments. while the Central Government procures and makes available foodgrains in bulk to the States the responsibility of distribution to the consumers rests with the State Government. The State Govem-nient of Maharashtra have reported that regular and adequate supplies of food-grains are being maintained in Melgha-area. Considering the special needs of the area the State Government have fixed higher scale of distribution, oPened Fair Price Shops (PPS) in 21 villages, provided 24 temporary godowns with foodgrains in the villages which have no access during rainy season, supplied foodgrains on credit to the Fair Price Shops and deployed 10 vehicles for delivery of foodgrains to the doorstep of FPSs. FCI has made available adequate quantities of foodgrains continuously in their depots in Amravati and Wardha.

GiddeliDes laid for private sector

*268. SHRI SOUPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY : DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the guideline laid down by Government in regard to power tariff for private power sector;

(b) whether the power generated in private sector in the country is costlier than that of the power generated in Public sector; and

(c) if so, ths details and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF saENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH): (a) The tariflF for sale of electricity by generating companies, both in public and private sector, is to be fixed in accordance with the tariflE notification issued by Government cf India 30-3-1992 (as amended from time to time)

(b) and (c). The tariff of a power station is dependent upon its completed cost: technology, funding pattern, interest rate, type, price and source of fuel; taxes and duties of fuel and equipment; year of completion; electricity pricing laws and regulation etc. These factors render comparability of the tariffs of different plants difficult.

Mega Power Projecb in Gujarat

*269. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of Gujjarat has planned to set up a Mega Powei- Project based on L.N.G.;

(b) the details of comparison of capital cost with different fuels and the selling price of electricity per unit;

(c) what quantum of power will be generated by this project and by when; and

(d) how much power will be uti lised by the state for its own pur poses and what percentage will be supplied to other states,

THE MINISTER OF STATS OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH):

(a) No. Sir.

(b) It ii difficuilt to compare capital cost and selling prlte of electricity per unit of power projects with different fuels as they depend upon the location, technology, capital structure, gestation period, type of fuel lamong the other factors.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in. vievr of (a) above.

Steps to check falling profits of SAIL

*270. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to -state:

(a) the strategy flnjaliised by SAIL for cost cutting and reduced consumption of coal etc. to check the falling profits; and

(b) the other incentive schemes devised in consultation with the trade unions to ensure better performance of the SAIL?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) and (b) The stra-telgy adoptedl by SAIL for cost cutting mainly includes stricter control and closer monitoring of finanxdai; expenditure and materials consumption; greater utilisation o' available manpower and other i*n-house facilities; emphasis on preventive maintenance with stricter adherence to standard operating practices and reduction in adminiB-trative over-heads etc.

As a part of controlling consum-ption of materials, SAIL has taken measoiresi to reduce the specific consumption of Coking Coal which includes ensuring supply of the light quality and quantity of ilndi-genous coal by associating independent third party analysts and escorting of coal rakes; adopting coial saving practices like charging smaller coke fractions in the Blast Furnaces, higher usage of Sinter in the last Furnace burden, modernisa- tion of Blast Furnaces etc.

Besides, SAIL is taking steps on a continuous basis to itmpnove its per-formance, which include modernisia-tion and technological upgradation of its plants, improving techno-eco-nomic factors i.e. reduction in coke rate, energy consumption, metallic input, improvement in yield, captive power generation, extensive customer/ (Contact, market oriented pxo-i duct-icnix, Improvement in quality, long term relationship with customers, leadership in service and customer satisfaction, strict control land monitoring of operating costs, higher productivity and greater autonomy to field ofiicers, etc.

The incentive schemes which have been primary production based are being reoriented, in consultation with the Trade Unions, to maks them focus more on current priority areas of cost reduction and quality improvement.

Sick and closed industrial units in the conntry

*271. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state;

da) the number of sick and closed industrial imits in the country as per the latest estimates;

(b) the aggregate book value as well as the current miarket value of capital assets locked up in these units; and